

The Single Tax Review / Spring, 1906

Single Tax Movement in Kansas

By W.H.T. Wakefield

KANSAS. SENTIMENT IN KANSAS FAVORABLE TO GROWTH OF SINGLE TAX—LOOTING THE COAL LANDS—"THE PITTSBURG KANSAN" FOR SALE.

Single Tax news is not very plentiful here, yet beneath the apparently tranquil surface things are working out the inevitable. It is along the collateral lines of public ownership of public utilities, control of rail-way rates, relief from Standard Oil extortions, trust exactions, etc., and the resulting political corruption that much activity is noted. The increase of radical sentiment is also to be noted and the "wild-eyed," radical Populists of ten years ago are astonished to find themselves the conservative, moss-backed element of the community. Of course. Single Taxers are not quite idle in this fertile field of thought, and are able to point to the impossibility of such abuses under Single Tax conditions, and to the utter futility of most of the remedies pro- posed by politicians.

An index of the state of public sentiment is best seen in the fact that railroad attorneys and politicians have negated the move made recently by railway managers to ignore the maximum rate and anti-dis- crimination statutes passed by our last Legislature, so as to test them in the Federal courts. "Don't you dare to pull that trigger, the gun's loaded," these shrew guardians of monopoly say to the more zealous than wise men of Wall Street who wish to yield to No. 26 Broadway. It is this legislation that enables a dozen independent oil refineries to operate in the State and oil to be sold at eight cents for which the Standard was getting twenty (retail prices) be- fore the independents began to operate. The independents' kerosene is of much bet- ter grade and far safer than the Standard's, but its sale is confined to this State by rail- road discrimination, as rates are prohibitory once the State line is crossed. The statutory oil rata is nine cents from Chanute to the State line of Nebraska and nineteen cents to town six miles over the line, and the same degree of increase on Missouri, Oklahoma and Colorado borders. It is 160 miles from Chanute to Nebraska line, yet

the rate more than doubles to go six miles beyond the line.

The State school fund of Kansas has just been distributed for the year and amounts to forty-three cents per capita of children of school age. That of Oklahoma is \$1.67 from rentals of a much smaller grant for same area.

No lands have been reserved for school or other public purposes in the Indian territory, though the Indians themselves used every possible effort to have it done. The largest loot of history is under consideration at Washington as to the best means of concealing it. This is the transfer to several Standard Oil railways of 3,000 square miles in the Choctaw country of the richest coal veins of the world. These veins are from 12 to 26 feet in thickness, quite near the surface, and the coal is entirely free from slate or other foreign matter, and of a quality scarcely distinguishable from the best Pennsylvania anthracite. Much of it has been sold for Lehigh coal, as it is equally hard, clean and of same heating quality.

That staunch Siagle Tax paper, The Kansan, of Pittsburg, Kansas, is for sale, the owner being 76 years of age and in feeble health. It is a snap as he offers it. Pittsburg has 16,000 people. The Kansan is 17 years old.

W. H. T. Wakefield. Mound City, Kas.